



Sam Brownback

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BROWNBACK PLEASED U.S. SANCTIONS POLICY TO FAVOR AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback today said he is pleased the Senate approved an amendment he supported, which requires the president to obtain Congressional approval before the U.S. implements new trade sanctions that include food or medicine.

“Food and medicine should never be used as a weapon against the people of other countries,” Brownback said. “Sanctions are an issue of great importance to Kansas with our strong agricultural economy, particularly with their impact on our wheat export.

“When you realize that about 10% of the world’s wheat market is cut off to U.S. farmers because of our own domestic policy, something is not right. Though 10% may not sound significant, it is very significant for a product for which price is so heavily influenced by supply.

“While our sanctions policy is not entirely responsible for the precipitous decline in wheat prices, and opening sanctioned countries is not the entire answer to rectifying the agriculture industry’s problems, it is fair to say that access to foreign markets truly is important to Kansas producers.

“I supported this legislation because it establishes a presumption that agriculture will not be used as a foreign policy tool unless there is an extreme circumstance in which the president and a majority of the Congress agree that such actions are necessary.

“In addition, some of these sales will take cash out of the coffers of terrorist states in order to buy food. That would leave them with that much less to spend on terrorism,” Brownback said.

The passing amendment was sponsored by U.S. Sen. John Ashcroft.